

Neil Oberheim, a 20-year veteran of the Illinois police force who was fatally shot on May 19, 2021, while serving in the line of duty. Officer Oberheim started his remarkable career at the Decatur Police Department before transferring to the Champaign Police Department in 2008.

Throughout his years of protecting and serving, Officer Oberheim earned two medals of valor and countless letters of commendation for his courageous acts of selfless bravery. He will be remembered by his colleagues as a model officer and someone who looked forward to making memories with his fellow officers at the annual State softball tournament hosted by the Police Benevolent and Protective Association of Illinois.

Officer Oberheim was not only a dedicated law enforcement officer, but also a devoted father and citizen who was loved and respected in his community. Officer Oberheim invested a great deal of time off duty to coaching several successful girls' softball teams, and the Monticello Sages Softball team paid tribute to his legacy as a coach and mentor: "Chris Oberheim was the ultimate girl dad and was so proud of his girls. He has given so much to the program and we are blessed to have known him."

Officer Oberheim was tragically killed in the line of duty while fulfilling his oath to serve and protect the people of the city of Champaign, and I am grateful for his years of service. He leaves behind his wife Amber and their 4 daughters Hannah, Avery, Addison, and Aubree. May his service, sacrifice, and kind spirit serve as an inspiration to us all.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF VANCE AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, on Friday, September 17, 2021, Vance Air Force Base celebrated its 80th anniversary. On this day, we honored the community, leadership, cadre of instructors, and over 35,000 pilots Vance has trained since 1941. Vance AFB is the top pilot-producing base for 2 years running and enables our Nation to provide and defend global power projection.

Vance Air Force Base's history dates back to 1941, originally founded as Air Corps Basic Flying School in Enid, OK. After World War II, the base reopened as a permanent facility on August 26, 1948, and became Vance AFB on July 9, 1949. The base is named in honor of Lt Col Leon Robert Vance, Jr., a native of Enid, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for gallantry in action over France on June 5, 1944.

For 80 years, Vance has served as the model for empowering the future of the U.S. Air Force through innovation and focuses on supporting flight operations everyday. The 71st Flying Training Wing operates over 200 aircraft, conducting more than 50,000 sorties annually, and logging more than 74,000

flight hours in the T-1A Jayhawk, T-6A Texan II, and T-38C Talon. Soon, Vance will add the T-7 Red Hawk to its training aircraft fleet. The base graduates 370 exceptional U.S. Air Force and allied student pilots from pilot training each year.

Vance is lucky because it benefits from outstanding community support and partnerships. The base supports more than 1,400 civilian employees and 1,400 military members and their families in the local area. Vance has a remarkable \$381.2 million impact on the local community. On September 17, thousands of friends and families who make the Vance mission a success gathered to celebrate the history and future of the base.

Vance strives to accomplish its mission every day to deliver the world's best pilots, develop resilient airmen and families, deploy combat ready warriors, and demonstrate Vance culture. I am proud that Vance will continue to train the finest airmen for the finest Air Force in the world. On behalf of my colleagues and the entire U.S. Senate, I want to congratulate the Vance AFB community on 80 years of excellence in service to our Nation. "Vance Proud!"

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT PESHTIGO FIRE

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a grave day in Wisconsin's history, the 150th anniversary of the "Great Peshtigo Fire." On this sesquicentennial anniversary, we remember the great city of Peshtigo, WI, that was completely destroyed on October 8, 1871, in the largest fire in U.S. history.

A community surrounded by dense forest, the city of Peshtigo was first settled in 1838. Located off the western shore of Green Bay in Marinette County, the area was first inhabited by Menominee and Ho-Chunk Native Americans. Sustained by lumber, shipping, and railroad interests, by the end of 1871, it was the tenth largest city in Wisconsin.

Historians and survivors of the fire theorize that the blaze was started by railroad workers who were cutting trees and burning debris outside of Peshtigo. A combination of a prolonged drought, a heavy reliance on wooden buildings, and 100-mph winds aligned to create a firestorm that reached 3 miles across and 1,000 feet high. Over the course of the night, the fire scorched over 1.2 million acres and caused an estimated \$169 million in damages. Between 1,200 and 2,500 people lost their lives. The fire's complete destruction of local records prevented an accurate death toll. An estimated 350 victims lie in a mass grave in Peshtigo, victims who could not be identified because they were either burned beyond recognition or because those who could identify them perished, too.

Although the Great Peshtigo Fire has been well documented, little has been written about the crucial role Na-

tive Americans played in preventing further loss of life among European settlers. One of the most compelling stories involves Abraham Place, who traveled on foot to Wisconsin from Vermont in 1837 to build a homestead in the Sugar Bush neighborhood just outside of Peshtigo. He married a Menominee woman, and together with their children, they tended one of the largest farms in the area. While marrying a Native-American woman was socially acceptable when Place first settled there, attitudes had changed by 1871, and he was scorned by his fellow settlers.

The Native Americans he regularly welcomed to his home warned him of the impending danger of fire after months of little to no rain and helped him create a 3-foot-deep firebreak around his farm. His European neighbors dismissed his precaution as the actions of a crazy man who had married a Native American. Mrs. Place's in-laws then spent hours placing dozens of wet blankets on the roof of their house to prevent its destruction. Their home was one of the few buildings still standing on the morning of October 9.

Many of the same neighbors who had ridiculed them ran to their house or died trying. Survivors found the bodies of 35 residents who never made it to the farm. The hundred or so refugees who arrived safely at the Place home found a make-shift hospital where they could nurse their wounds and recuperate. Some stayed for weeks, their earlier disdain cured by necessity.

In the days following the Peshtigo fire, survivors emerged from the Peshtigo River and other safe havens untouched by the flames to look for missing loved ones and to begin to rebuild their lives. As word of the devastation spread, donations of food, clothing, and money poured in from across the State, the Nation, and several foreign countries. This selfless, unified show of support empowered the people of Peshtigo to rebuild their homes and restore their community.

Occurring on the same night as the Great Chicago Fire, the Peshtigo fire has been largely forgotten, even though the Wisconsin death toll is estimated to be seven times that of the Chicago tragedy. That is why I join Peshtigo residents in remembering the time when prejudices that turned neighbors into enemies were set aside in the midst of unimaginable hardship. And I applaud their efforts to pause this October 8 to remember this inconceivable catastrophe, commemorate its victims and honor the resilience of those who worked so hard to rebuild this city from the ashes of total devastation into the tranquil community of today.

TRIBUTE TO DOROTHY SHIRLEY LICHT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I want to honor a former First Lady of Rhode Island, Mrs. Dorothy Shirley